**EPISTAXIS**

**DESCRIPTION:**

Epistaxis is a nosebleed. Nosebleeds are very common and can occur at any age but are twice as common in children. Most nosebleeds are harmless and do not require treatment. Nosebleeds usually happen when a small blood vessel inside the nose lining bursts and bleeds.

**SIGNS AND SYMPTONS:**

Bleeding usually occurs from only one nostril, and often no apparent explanation is known. They are unlikely to be a symptom of any other disorder unless injury has occurred or serious conditions such as significant blood loss, vertigo, increase in pulse, pallor, shortness of breath, or a drop in blood pressure are present.

**DIAGNOSIS:**

A physical examination along with patient history regarding the frequency of the nosebleeds, whether an injury has occurred, or whether the symptoms indicate that a disease may be present is usually sufficient for determining a diagnosis.

**TREATMENT:**

While in the emergency department, the doctor will attempt to find the site of the bleeding and treat it.

For severe nosebleeds, you may have a blood test to estimate how much blood you have lost.

To stop bleeding your health care provider may:

Apply an ointment that slows the blood flow.

Cautery (a tool which “burns” or “freezes” the blood vessels) to seal the blood vessels so they no longer break open

Packing your nose with guaze or special dressing

**PATIENT ACTION:**

If your nose is “packed” the gauze may need to remain in place for up to two days. Do not

remove it yourself. You should go back to your doctor to have it removed. With packing you may be prescribed antibiotics to prevent a bacterial infection. If nasal packing is not needed, your doctor may advise you to apply an antibiotic ointment inside the nose.

Home care: Rest quietly for the next 12-24 hrs, avoid hot liquids for at least 24 hours after a nosebleed, do not pick or blow your nose for 12 hours, avoid strenuous exercise, straining or lifting heavy items for seven days, avoid aspirin if possible (if your doctor has prescribed aspirin for a specific condition, ask your doctor what you can do to prevent nosebleeds).

